



The President's Daily Brief

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DAILY BRIEF
9 JANUARY 1967

1. Communist China

Chinese diplomats are now on their way home from at least 22 countries. Peking has not closed any of its embassies or consulates, but the exodus has left most of them with nothing but a skeleton staff. The returning diplomats are probably going to be cleansed of their dirty bourgeois thoughts and get recharged with Mao.

They will find China in chaos. Clashes between workers and Mao's Red Guards are being reported from Canton in the south to Peking in the north. Now there are signs that Mao and Lin no longer have complete faith in the political loyalty of the army and public security forces.

2. South Vietnam

A first draft of the new constitution is to be presented to the full assembly on Wednesday.

It will call for a modified presidential system, with a popularly elected president and an appointed prime minister. The drafters are said to have made special efforts to put in enough checks and balances to keep the president from becoming a dictator.

The process is far from finished, however. The assembly has about two and a half months to resolve some of the finer points, and the debates are likely to be difficult. Furthermore, the military Directorate will almost surely plug for some changes, and the disagreement between Directorate and assembly over the right of the former to make such changes is far from resolved.

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3. Ecuador

Three American tuna clippers were seized by Ecuador on Saturday. The boats were 40 to 60 miles offshore, but Ecuador claims a 200-mile territorial limit and the subject is politically a hot one.

While the boats may get off with a fine, opportunistic politicians in the National Assembly are likely to make the most of the chance to renew attacks on the government and on the US. They already have raised a hue and cry over a now-defunct secret agreement between the US and Ecuador which eased restrictions on US fishermen in 1963.

4. Israel

The situation along the Syrian-Israeli frontier is looking more ominous. Tanks have exchanged fire during the past two days and this takes things a step beyond the usual sniping with smaller weapons. Thus far no Israelis have been killed, but if there are fatalities, a reprisal could be mounted with little or no warning.

5. Congo

After considerable prodding, Mobutu has made a new bid to Union Minière. His latest proposition would leave the Congolese controlling production, with the company doing the marketing. Mobutu also says he is willing to negotiate on the question of who owns the copper in the pipeline. The ball is now in the company court.

6. West Germany

The Kiesinger government appears to be backing away from the traditional German position that favored joint control of a NATO nuclear force. Kiesinger, who realizes there is little prospect for this, seems willing to pursue German nuclear interests through the NATO Nuclear Planning Group, which deals in strategy, not weapons control.

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